

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 NEW DE 12955 081448Z

43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

AID-20 NIC-01 CU-04 DRC-01 PC-15 /182 W

----- 067545

R 081315Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7787

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 12955

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJECT: DELHI EXPERIENCES ITS FIRST "GENERAL STRIKE"

SUMMARY: LEFTIST LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND THE JANA SANGH SEPARATELY ORGANIZED A DAY'S "GENERAL STRIKE" DELHI ON NOVEMBER 6. THOUGH CALLED A "BANDH" (CLOSURE), IT WAS ONLY PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL, BASICALLY PEACEFUL, AND DID NOT ENGULF THE CAPITAL IN VIOLENCE AS REPORTED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES. NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS THE FIRST GENERAL STRIKE TO BE CALLED IN THE UNION CAPITAL SINCE INDEPENDENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. LEFTIST LABOR UNIONS ORGANIZED A "GENERAL STRIKE" IN DELHI TO PROTEST AGAINST RISING PRICES, SCARCITIES AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES. THE CENTER OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS (CITU), THE LABOR WING OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA, MARXIST (CPM), JOINED BY NEHRU UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, INITIATED THE MOVE FOR THE "DELHI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 NEW DE 12955 081448Z

BANDH". THE ALL-INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS (AITUC), AFFILIATED

WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (CPI), FOLLOWED THIS WITH A CALL FOR A UNITED "BANDH" EFFORT. THE RIGHTIST JANA SANGH ALSO JOINED THE BANDWAGON THE DAY BEFORE THE STRIKE WAS SCHEDULED. ITS PRESIDENT L.K. ADVANI AND SOME 300 ACTIVISTS WERE ARRESTED WHEN A PROCESSION LED BY THEM TURNED VIOLENT. THE LOCALLY POWERFUL INDIAN NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS, LINKED TO THE RULING CONGRESS, NOT ONLY DISSOCIATED ITSELF FROM THE "BANDH" BUT OPENLY CAME OUT AGAINST IT. THOUGH CALLED A "BANDH" THE STRIKE WAS NEITHER AS EXTENSIVE NOR AS EFFECTIVE AS SUCH GENERAL PROTESTS ORGANIZED IN THE PAST IN CALCUTTA AND BOMBAY, BUT IT WAS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND TO BE HELD IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL SINCE INDEPENDENCE.

2. BY MIDDAY NOVEMBER 6, THE "DEHHI BANDH" HAD SEVERELY AFFECTED COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE THROUGHOUT THE UNION TERRITORY WITH MOST BANK EMPLOYEES, TEXTILE AND FACTORY WORKERS STAYING AWAY FROM THEIR JOBS. NEWSPAPER OFFICES WERE ALSO CLOSED. MANY CINEMAS AND RESTAURANTS, AS WELL AS SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, REMAINED CLOSED. IN A NUMBER OF AREAS, SHOPKEEPERS PULLED DOWN THEIR SHUTTERS EITHER BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION OR FEAR OF PROPERTY DAMAGE. THE "BANDH" WAS GENERALLY PEACEFUL, BUT THERE WERE STRAY INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE IN SOME INDUSTRIAL AREAS, LEADING TO TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL OF CITY TRANSPORT BUSES FROM THESE LOCALITIES AND SOME TEAR-GASSING IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT. ALL GOI OFFICES EXCEPT THE JANA SANGH-CONTROLLED MUNICIPAL CORPORATION FUNCTIONED NORMALLY, AS DID THE SUPREME COURT, MOST HOSPITALS, RAILROAD STATIONS, AIRPORTS, LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, AND EVEN THE NORMALLY ERRATIC ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT. CABS AND OTHER HIRED MEANS OF TRANSPORT PLIED AS USUAL. THE LT. GOVERNOR OF DELHI TOLD AN EMBOFF THE AUTHORITIES HAD STERNLY WARNED THE ORGANIZERS NOT TO HALT VITAL SERVICES. HE WAS VERY RELAXED ABOUT THE "BANDH" AND SAID, INDEED, IT WAS PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE PEOPLE SHOULD WISH TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN OVER RISING PRICES.

3. THOUGH THE CREDIT FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE "BANDH" IS EVENLY SHARED, IT REPRESENTS THE FIRST MAJOR CPM ATTEMPT TO MAKE ITS PRESENCE FELT IN THE UNION CAPITAL. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 NEW DE 12955 081448Z

THE CPM LABOR FRONT, WHICH HAS ALREADY LOST MUCH GROUND TO ITS CONGRESS AND CPM COUNTERPARTS, HAD NO OPTION BUT TO FALL IN LINE. THE JANA SANGH'S BELATED JOINING OF THE FRAY SERVED A DUAL PURPOSE: TO PREVENT OTHER PARTIES FROM PLAYING A BIG ROLE BY THEMSELVES IN DELHI, ITS MAJOR STRONGHOLD; AND TO SHARE THE UNPOPULARITY OF THE WATER-WORKERS STRIKE IT HAD ORGANIZED A DAY EARLIER. MOYNIHAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, LABOR STRIKES, LABOR UNIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NEWDE12955
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731147/aaaabied.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <10-Jan-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DELHI EXPERIENCES ITS FIRST "GENERAL STRIKE" SUMMARY: LEFTIST LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND THE JANA SANGH
TAGS: ELAB, IN, CITU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005